

THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST

**ISSUED BY THE
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**

24 NOVEMBER 1963
~~**TOP SECRET**~~

1. North Vietnam - a. North Vietnamese leaders
South Vietnam are pressing their campaign for neu-
tralization of South Vietnam.

b. They can count on Cambodia's support. Prince Sihanouk has said he believes neutralization of South Vietnam to be the only way to keep his country and the rest of the area from falling eventually into Commu-
nist hands.

c. The French feel the same way. [REDACTED]

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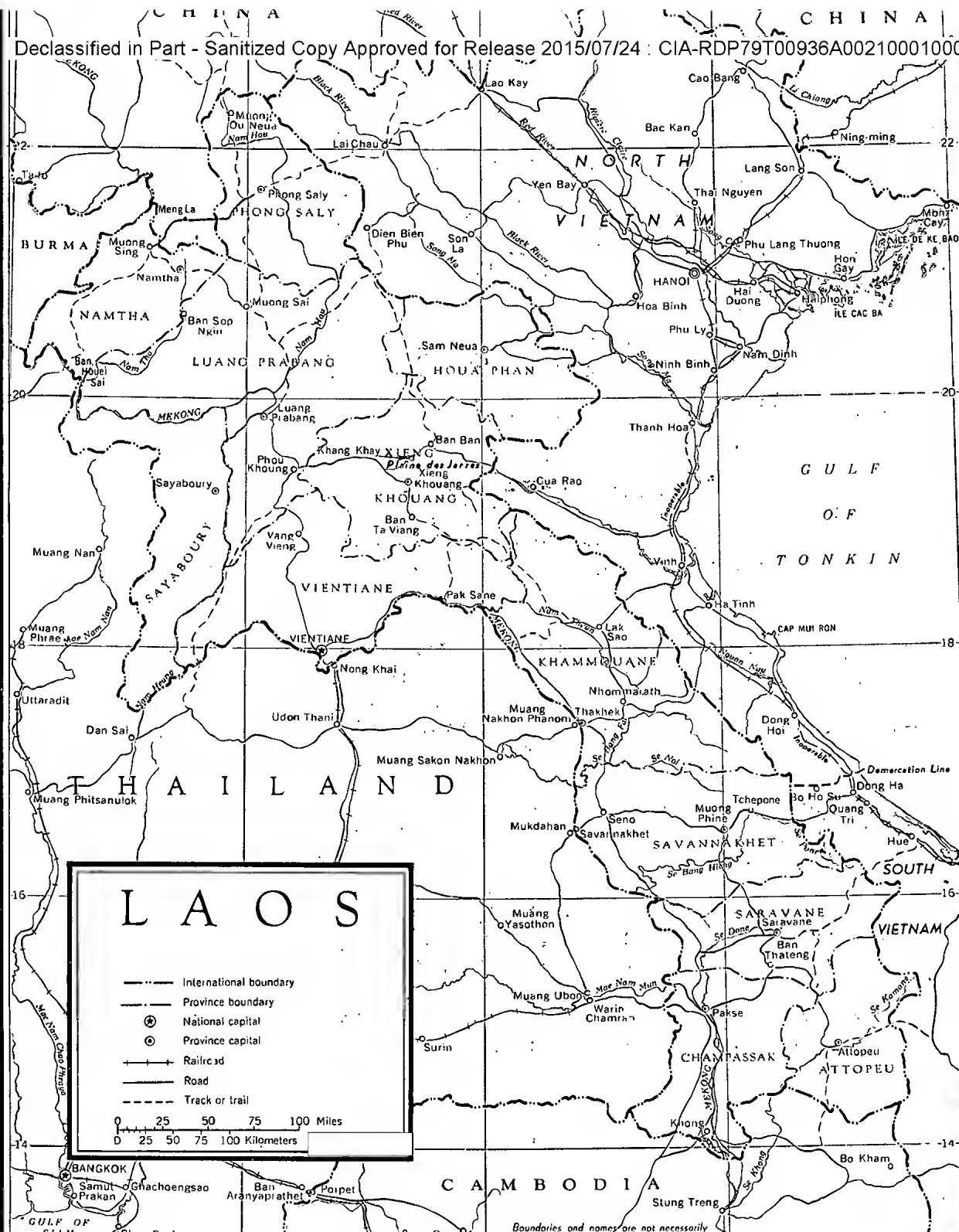
d. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] the North Vietnamese have talked Souvanna into backing the neutralization proposi-
tion in the UN.

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f. As part of the same campaign, the North Vietnamese have told the French they believe sentiment is growing in the US for withdrawal of US forces. They reportedly plan to keep the heat on to encourage it.

g. Hanoi is at the same time trying quietly to encourage the belief that it is ready to be reasonable.

h. [] North Vietnamese leaders feel that neutrality for South Vietnam and eventual reunification is the only way they, too, can escape from Peiping's clutches.

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2. Laos

a. As is usual in Laos, the tentative agreement for a cease-fire reached last week between Kong Le and Pathet Lao commander Singkapo came to naught.

b. Each side accuses the other of planning to use a cease-fire to screen preparations for larger attacks.

c. There is scattered fighting in the Plaine des Jarres. Lao Army, neutralist, and Meo guerrilla elements are jointly engaged in a limited offensive in the Vang Vieng

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area north of Vientiane on Route 13. They hope to gain control of that town and its small airfield.

d. We have been anticipating an expansion of the fighting with the recent advent of the dry season.

3. Cambodia

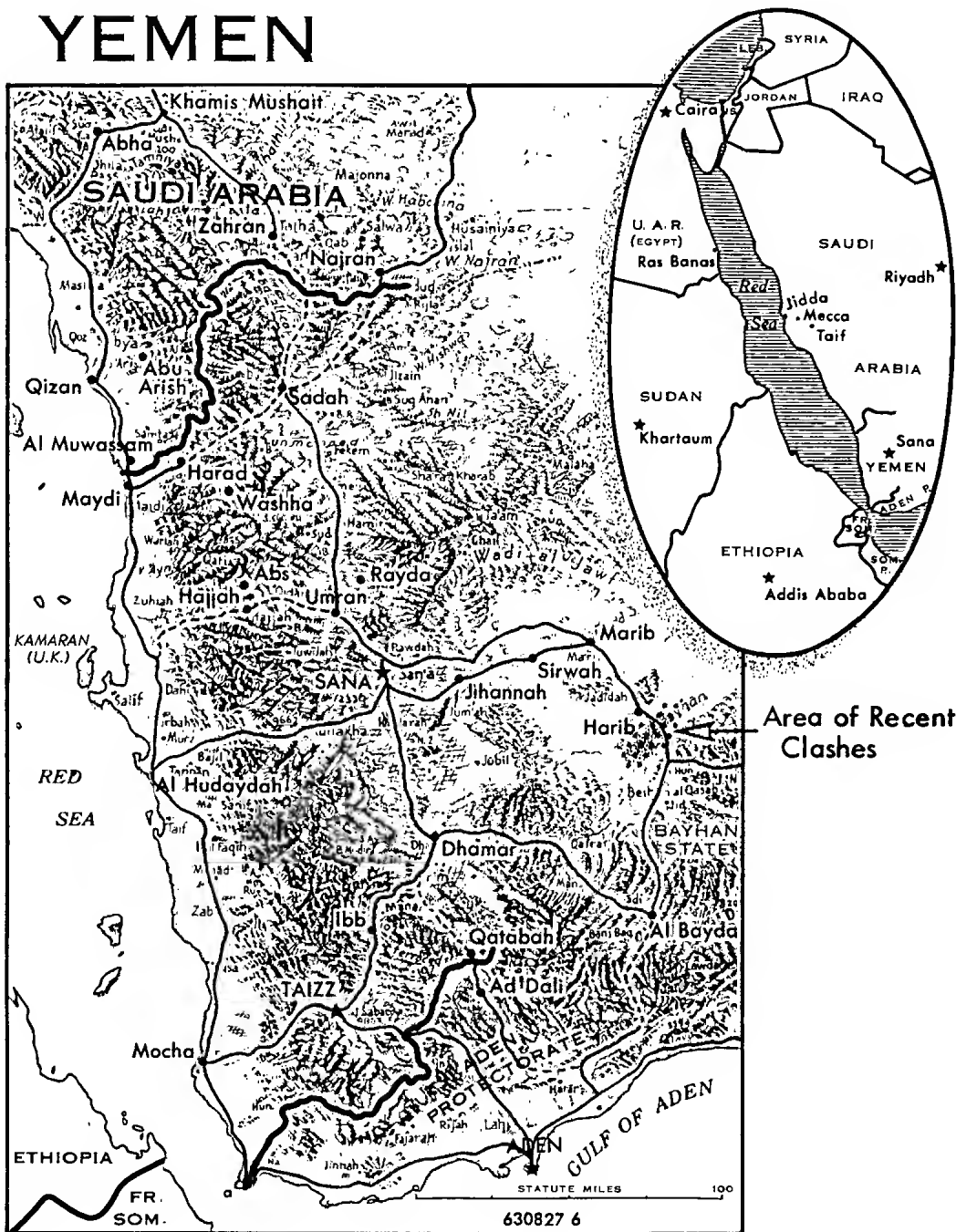
a. Sihanouk knows his actions against us have increased his vulnerability to the Communist bloc, and he is looking to the French to bail him out.

c. He apparently hopes that the availability of French aid will enable him to keep his balance with the Communists and fend off their pressure.

d. The French have told our Embassy in Paris that plans are afoot for French Defense Minister Messmer to go to Cambodia in January.

(Cont'd)

YEMEN



Area of Recent Clashes

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e. Sihanouk's actions toward the US have not been universally popular. This is particularly true among government officials, the business community (who have reason to fear stepped-up nationalization), and the military, where the US retains a considerable reservoir of goodwill.

f. Indications are that Sihanouk will try to win fuller support by creating new feuds with neighboring South Vietnam and Thailand. This is a gambit he has used to advantage in past difficulties.

4. Yemen-Egypt

a. A number of Yemeni leaders have told us they want the Egyptians to get out of the Yemen. They want to be left alone to solve their own problems.

b. This is especially true of those Sheikhs with large tribal followings.

c. A general uprising against the Egyptians is not likely at the moment, but the longer they remain, the greater the possibility of major pro-government tribes deserting to the royalists.

(Cont'd)

d. Nasir, with some 30,000 troops in the Yemen, has grudgingly promised to pull out 5,000 before the end of the year. So far there has been no sign he is preparing to do so.

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5. Italy

a. The Christian Democrats and Socialists have finally reached an agreement on cabinet assignments and a program for a "centerleft" coalition government.

b. Negotiations were especially tough, but apparently President Kennedy's death acted as a catalyst, to bring the two together.

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d. With Moro premier, Nenni will probably become vice-premier. Saragat, who is pro-US and pro-NATO, is most likely to be named Foreign Minister.

NOTES

- A. India-USSR The Indian military attache in Moscow feels that the Russians are dragging their feet in the matter of military assistance for India. Meanwhile, we have a report (not yet confirmed) from New Delhi that Defense Minister Chavan has decided to look to us hereafter for fighter aircraft.
- B. USSR Our Embassy in Moscow has gotten word of strikes recently at Ryazan, near Moscow, and in Leningrad. The cause of the Ryazan incident is not clear, but bread shortages apparently were behind the Leningrad strikes. Similar disturbances were reported last month from several points in southern Russia.